

# ***REINCARNATION***

VOL. VII. CHICAGO, MAY-JUNE-JULY-AUGUST, 1926 No. 4

---

## *IS OUR CIVILIZATION DISEASED?*

What an error, what an injustice to the great scheme of things in conception is the notion that our system of world civilization is in whole or in part diseased! Yet the suggestion is often made by the learned and the would-be philosophic.

Humanity observes civilization as imperfect, as incomplete or as contradicting in its manifestations the ideals of progress and harmony. But it is one thing to charge it with imperfection, with being momentarily out of touch with the ideal; and it is quite a different, a blasphemous thing to charge civilization with being diseased! Yet this actually occurs: men accuse the great organism of ordered human progress in associated or coördinated relationships with being in some

loathsome state of bodily disorder, perhaps leprously progressing to full degeneration and dissolution!

It is wiser to consider those who indulge in such utterance as uninformed or as heedless of the obvious fact that the ordered evolution of the human social organism is a major, a coördinate part of the plan of God which must advance as inevitably as march the flowing and ebbing of the tides!

To observe justly the part played by evolution in the progress of the plan of God requires a knowledge of the scheme of things in general. And that knowledge can only be obtained by careful study. The writings of those who have presented this topic are open to all readers. Begin with Madame Blavatsky and follow on through her successors' works.

Do not conceive the oscillations in human life to be small or brief. "A thousand years are but as yesterday in His sight when it is passed"! Conceive of the long periods of time that passed like a dream for Europe during the dark ages! Civilization then was in transition from the ancient regime of Greece and Rome to that of the new attempt to bring fresh ideas of human interrelations to the world.

Gathered forces, new combinations, fresh plans and the long expected flow of the forces of God to the aid of men organized for unity and common helpfulness have made possible our present order. We need coördination through the world, union and not opposition, a fair apportionment of the world's goods!



New powers or forces given to men may solve many problems. If man gains the power to wrest from Nature his means of living by the use of but small areas of land, if he can get the "raw materials" required for his complex civilization without going too far afield he will make a great gain indeed in his facility of living. Great impetus of helpfulness we must expect and not decadence or destruction.

Surely the general appearance of our common life is that of wholesome youth, freshness and vigor. The reaction after the war is not the reaction of degeneration; it is the return spring of vigor, of solemn resolve in the presence of some lessons learned at least.

Europe has failed to seize her chance for a union of states with some feeling of brotherhood that she had immediately after the war. That was and is the key-note of the great harmony of our time—unity in confraternity.

Beaten Germany begs before the League of Nations some of her colonies back—all taken from her after the war. Give her them! Let Germany live; let her expand and thrive again. Give her generous thoughts, fraternal feelings and she will not so much wish or need to fight again!

No, there is no disease in our civilization; but there is lack of vision to see the new signs that mark the change in the times to the new regime of unity in confraternity.

W. V.-H.

*THE LOST CHORD OF CHRISTIANITY*

When the writer first heard the expression, "The Lost Chord of Christianity," he does not know, but it was a long time ago, more than thirty years at least, and in it "chord" evidently has in its meaning some such relation to Christianity as, in sound, it has to music.

The writer does not know much about Christianity and less about music, but between fifty and sixty years ago he did study sound as a part of physics, and sound is described or defined as impressions made on the ear by vibrations of the air. Whether that is a valid definition does not matter for our purpose; however, a chord in music is a harmonious blending of two or more sounds of different rates of vibration.

If we strike one solid body repeatedly by another, and the vibrations so caused are of very short duration, we sense a succession of noises as they are called. But if the interval between strokes is shortened the noises, so-called, begin to blend and when the rapidity of strokes reaches about sixteen to the second, the separate noises are no longer sensed but a low musical tone that rises in pitch with the increasing rapidity of the strokes, the main vibration caused by each stroke causing what we sense as the pitch of the sound.

Now it seems that man is so constructed that there is a cycle in ascending rates of vibration or pitch that to him is natural, regardless of whether he has any scientific knowledge of music or not. The ratios of the rate of vibration to the first tone in this cycle are as follows:



1,  $9|8$ ,  $5|4$ ,  $4|3$ ,  $3|2$ ,  $5|3$ ,  $15|8$ , 2.

These seven intervals with the eight notes are called an octave. It has been claimed that certain relations of orbits of the planets and certain measurements of the platonic solids have these same ratios, but the writer has not however been able to find them. Writing the ratios of one note to the next they come:

$9|8$ ,  $10|9$ ,  $16|15$ ,  $9|8$ ,  $10|9$ ,  $9|8$ ,  $16|15$

In music it is customary to designate these different tones by letters of the alphabet: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and to give them a fixed place on the lines and spaces of the staff. We also note that the ratio of the velocity of C:E:G equals 4:5:6; also G:B:D equals 4:5:6; and the question naturally arises: Are the triads the result of the diatonic scale, or is the scale the result of the triads? The easiest way out of it perhaps is to recognize here the fact that cause and effect are one, which is always so, though not so easily seen. It is a fine example of the geometrizing of God.

It will be seen that in the octave there are five larger intervals or steps and two smaller ones, known as tones and half tones, but there are differences in them so that if we begin cycles in different places on the staff our notes and half notes are not the same. Consequently, if an instrument is tuned to play music that has one note for the start of the cycle, key-note, it is out of tune for music written with another key-note, and so much out of tune that it is readily sensed.

Tuning an instrument like a piano every time it is desired to play something in another key would be out of the question, and to write all

music in one key is also undesirable, so they have done as my old friend suggested when he said, "pool your errors," and have adopted a scale which instead of five tones and two half tones of varying steps, have divided the octave into twelve half tones of equal steps, therefore the ratio of one note to the next will be 1:(twelfth root of 2), which equals 1:(1.05946 etc.).

Suppose we start with the middle C of the piano, having 256 vibrations per second, then we will get the number of vibrations for the octave as given in the second column below, while that of the diatonic is given in the first column and the difference in vibrations per second in the third column

256	256	
	271.22	
288	287.35	0.65
	304.43	
320	322.53	2.53
341.4	341.71	0.31
	362.01	
384.1	383.60	0.50
426.8	430.57	3.77
	456.18	
480.1	483.30	3.20
512	512	0.00

It will be seen that the scale of even half tones is artificial, and to tune an instrument to it requires mechanical means, confirming the old saying that there are tricks in all trades. In this case it is the beats that are used to turn the tricks.



Returning to our triads: 4:5:6, we see that tones resulting from combinations of notes having rates of vibration in the ratio of 4:5:6 will pass through a rhythmical evolution every four vibrations of the basic note, but while we cannot follow the movement in detail we sense the rhythm as a whole and the sensation is pleasant and we call it harmony and name the combination a chord. If we take the less simple ratio of 10:12:15 we do not sense the rhythm so clearly, but still enough so that it is called a chord (minor). If we take the still more complex combination using the prime numbers 11:13:17, we fail entirely to sense the rhythm and we call it a discord.

Besides the two scales mentioned above, we might mention two series having some bearing on our subject, namely, series of octaves where the rates are as 1:2:4:8:16, etc., and the series of harmonics where the ratios of vibrations are as 1:2:3:4:5, etc. It will be seen that the first two terms of these series are the same and the third harmonic corresponds to the fifth in the second octave, and the fifth term in the harmonic corresponds to the third in the octaves. It will be seen if we place the terms of the harmonic series on the diatonic they come closer and closer together as we ascend the series, so that music can be written with them suited to horns with no valves where various harmonics can be obtained by lip action.

We have mentioned beats, and in passing it may be well to explain when two tones very nearly of the same rate of vibration are sounded together there is a swelling and a shrinking in the

volume of sound every time one note gains a vibration on the other. The more pure the tones are the more distinct will be the beats.

From all the above pertaining to the subject of chords in music, we hope we can get an idea of what the same word must mean in our title. Can we find in the complex notions of Christianity some rhythmical relation of the fundamental elements? Starting with the idea of God as the fundamental note we must find others that are in harmony therewith.

The Christian says God is love; God is all-wise; God is absolutely just, etc. With this Christian concept of God we may quote from St. Paul: "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Yet all the time we are trying to "put one over" on God and all the time we fail. There can hardly be a more positive statement of the law that action and reaction are equal, that cause and effect are one and the same, that there are always adjustments being made to bring about justice, etc. Schemes of salvation through vicarious atonement, salvation through faith, death-bed repentance, etc., are all schemes to set St. Paul's pronouncement at naught, and more than once in the *Acts* we read that "faith without works is dead."

All the schemes in Christianity, Buddhism and other religions to dodge karma twist the teachings of those same religions. We are forced to conclude that karma is an important note in Christianity. Again so far as we can see, manifestation proceeds cyclically. Even to reap the



fruits of our physical acts we must go where they can be reaped. We do not expect to sow cotton in Texas and reap wheat in Illinois. The harvest from physical acts we must reap on the physical plane, so that even the sowing and reaping referred to by St. Paul requires reincarnation, as we all know we die without reaping all our physical plane karma, and besides we have read our Bible with little understanding if we do not see reincarnation definitely stated or implied from *Psalms* to *Revelation*.

We are forced to conclude that, for a harmonious Christianity, we must have an all-loving, all-wise, all-just and all-powerful God, and His plan calls for karma and reincarnation as basic laws to be manifest in carrying out His plan and sound out the chord that Christianity should, and we hope the time is not far distant when the twin doctrines of karma and reincarnation may find their way back into Christianity so that it may sound out the grand chord that is its due.

*Elliot Holbrook.*



## THE WIDE-SPREAD KNOWLEDGE OF REINCARNATION

In Europe and America the knowledge that reincarnation is a natural phenomenon for humanity is not known to be a possibility by the great majority of people.

To have that knowledge and to accept the truth about the great central fact is to make the whole outlook upon life quite new. It explains life as it is passing or has passed, and it gives new hope for the future.

All evolution is manifestly from the lower to the higher. To be born again and again is to move gradually from lower to higher estate, from minor to major powers, from undesired weakness to much craved power. All that one sees that he lacks yet longs for will come in time.

All aspirations for ourselves will be eventually realized. Two things there are for us to do—to be patient and to strive unceasingly. And amidst our patience and as a part of our effort we must learn the lessons of progress in order to hasten upon the way and to be very useful all the time.

This knowledge it is not very hard to disseminate. You speak equally to John your servant or to Samuel the professor, varying to suit the proportions of your Anglo-Saxon to your classically derived terms, as thus:

*Reincarnationist:* Every-other-man, I am confident that, in obedience to a great Law, all men, having lived as such for a space and leaving the physical body remain for an interval in heaven



worlds and then come through rebirth again to human embodiment.

*Every-other-man:* Sir, you astonish me and you outrage my sense of reason. If you seriously mean what you say you must have at your tongue's end adequate replies to the many questions which I will ask.

Then begins a real logomachy—a happy contest in which you sharpen your wits, dig deeper and more sharply into your store of knowledge and gain the welcome joy of aiding a fellow-man. For, in the Eastern lands where all intelligent men accept this mighty truth, they say that the *greatest gift is the gift of the Law*.

If your first interview does not convince Every-other-man that your cause is just, renewed conversations may do so. But it seems wise not to press such matters too sharply. The power of the Word is wondrous great. It eats into the heart; it burns its way into the mind. And many who have had hints will ask again. But if the reincarnationist is wise he will not urge the subject himself; he should usually let the first-time hearer make the later advances.

If each of us who knows will find voice and speech when opportunity comes, much can be done in a few years. Already the word 'reincarnation' has new values in Europe and America. The old thought associations about it are almost gone and the man who uses the term now is beginning to find sensible ideas, thought-forms, easily contacted as hanging about it.

So, in small and large ways we must strive to extend this wondrous knowledge. *W. V-H.*

*A LIFE WORTH LIVING*

If I can stop one heart from breaking,  
I shall not live in vain;  
If I can ease one life the aching,  
Or cool one pain,  
Or help one fainting robin  
Into his nest again,  
I shall not live in vain.

*Emily Dickinson.*

The lovely lines quoted above are especially full of meaning for one who is aware of the laws of karma and reincarnation. With the true poet's insight the author saw that the accumulation of wealth and fame and pleasure are not the things which make life worth while but that all these are as nothing as compared with even one deed of helpfulness to another. The author's assertion that a kind deed, whether it be of obviously great importance or one of seemingly small importance, gives sufficient value to one's life to make it worth living, is an encouraging thought to anyone. But to one who knows that we shall live many times, the lines are still more meaningful, for then follows the thought that by the steady accumulation of such helpful deeds, even though separated by lives, one shall acquire the constant attitude of helpfulness.

It is significant that the helpful acts which are cited are all those which require no great resources of wealth or power or strength for their accomplishment. They are the things which require for their achievement the spiritual qualities of good will and sympathy. No one need



despair of making his life a worth-while one if he realizes that in order to do worthy deeds he requires no further capital than the desire to lift another's burden and the will to carry out that desire.

It is also significant to one who believes in the evolution of the spirit to note that a kindness to animals is included as one of those deeds which prevent one's life from having been lived in vain. The knowledge of the evolution of spirit through forms of life other than human opens up a whole field of service which would otherwise be neglected. Saint Francis called the birds "little brothers" and so they seem to one who is aware of the spark of divine life which is in them. The assistance given to the life developing in these lower forms is assistance given in the working out of the plan for the life of the world as a whole, and so has worth and dignity, as does any act which furthers the achievement of this plan.

The poet has made her point more striking by mentioning the examples in what appears to be the reverse order of their importance. While she does this to emphasize the point that the slightest act of kindness redeems a life from utter worthlessness, the one who knows that the reactions in the higher realms of life are not always in the same ratio as the seeming values of the actions on the physical plane, will see more meaning in the arrangement. For who knows the relative importance of various deeds if they be but parts of the Great Plan? Hence what appears to us as a small act of generosity

or kindness may be of vast significance when viewed from a higher standpoint. Thus these lines may be made to yield to one who reads them thoughtfully a striking commentary on relative values which cannot fail to give hope and courage to one no matter how disheartened by failure to accomplish great things either on account of the lack of opportunities or on account of the paucity of his talents.

*Elsie Parker Johnson.*



This day, how shall I wing away from the cold asperities of mundane cares? Other days have had their ways all distinctive—and this one, what new light may shine down from the glowing heart of God?

There is a richness and fulness in the inner worlds that our lowest one does not yet know. How the tension of the highest outpouring must be growing and seeking ways to find outlet and expression down below! Those are needed who would seek and find ways to let God's Grace flow down!

There is a power that makes all things new; it is the divine novelty of God's infinitude of plenteousness that makes this possible. The forces of God's higher nature would express themselves in the lower, and one wonders if they ever reach explosive tension—demanding expression below.

*W. V-H.*



*DUTY AND KARMA*

Almost all men recognize that there are things that they ought to do,—these are duties, obligations to be fulfilled, responsibilities accepted and to be discharged. Men find themselves in a tangle of such duties, into which they have grown naturally or stepped into with full knowledge.

In this condition it is easy to recognize the compulsion of karma. The man may be enmeshed in his own limitations and so tightly that he can hardly get out of them. Many things come to him with the impression of “must,” and he does not even feel like rebelling against this compulsion. The law of karma must be accepted, for he realizes that in that way only can freedom be found in the end. The man thus willingly makes of himself a burden-bearer, and while in the course of time some burdens may drop off, usually others take their places. Such duties are karmic, that is they are of the man’s own bringing about, either in this life or in lives before the present one. When he can look back and see how his own actions involved him into assuming duties, the man knows that the karma is of the present life; while if he has had things happen to him “out of the blue,” unexpectedly, without his own causing, then they must be regarded as the reactions of his actions in some former life. Naturally as he fulfills his duties he is to that extent becoming free of his karmic debt.

Happily, however, the man is usually not entirely forced to work at the task of exhausting his old karma, which in most cases is very great

in amount, but of which only a small part is allotted to the man for outworking in a single life. There is ordinarily a considerable amount of time and energy over which the man has free choice and disposal. Now many people deal with this in a light and irresponsible manner, thus frittering away golden hours and opportunities which could have been invested wisely and which in time might have yielded an abundant harvest of gain in power, wisdom and skill, thus enabling the man to continue at the long task of working out his karma with greater effectiveness and success. And if the man neglects opportunities for self-improvement he remains in an unfavorable position as to karma.

If the man has realized that evolution through the ages is a fact, then the necessity for taking an intelligent and active interest and part in this evolution is easily apparent. And as the man has in the main authority only over himself, it is on himself chiefly that he should work, leaving to others the same freedom of action that he himself holds as his right. But he has a very great field for usefulness in working for the amelioration of the world's heavy karma. In the case of many men who have the knowledge of karma, reincarnation and evolution, the necessity of throwing themselves heart, soul and body into work for the world becomes so urgent that they regard it as a duty just as much as though it were karmic and personal. It is wise, however, to try to remove some of the elements of difficulty from this new and higher conception of duty. It may be realized by a little reflection



that the new idea of duty is one that has arisen within one's self; it is not imposed harshly from without. It is well to consider it a privilege to assume duties of this universal character, and use the powers acquired in struggling with one's own personal karma to overcome some of the world's difficulties and carry a little of its burden.

And it would be well not to work unhappily even in our own most serious karmic troubles. We are given to understand that the Logos of our world system performs His huge labors of maintaining the life of the sun and the planets with love and joy. Yet this is to Him very much what our worldly duties and karma are to us. We should try to imitate the example of our great Masters who in their turn are growing more and more as is the Logos. May we not realize that our very drudgeries may as well be regarded as opportunities for working with an inner joy?

C. S.

A wise priest knows he now must reap  
The fruits of deeds of former births.  
For be they many or but few,  
Deeds done in cov'tousness or hate  
Or through infatuation's power,  
Must bear their needful consequence.  
Hence not to cov'tousness, nor hate,  
Nor to infatuation's power  
The wise priest yields, but knowledge seeks  
And leaves the way to punishment.

*From Warren's "Buddhism in Translations"*  
*(Milindapañha, 65, 11)*

## HELP WESTERN CIVILIZATION TO AID EASTERN PEOPLES

For many years Dr. August Schachner, of Louisville, Kentucky, has been known as one of America's most scientific and skillful surgeons as well as a most keen observer and accurate thinker. In an article printed in the *Medical Journal and Record*, New York, February 3, 1926, he tells of his recent visit to India and the far East, dwelling strongly upon his medical observations. Let us quote:

Extravagant estimates as to the annual number of deaths from such diseases as the plague and cholera were not uncommon, originating among members of the Indian Medical Service. There are estimates of as many as a million deaths each from plague and cholera during the course of a year throughout India. This is likely overdrawn but it would be difficult for the government itself to give more than approximately correct figures on their birth and death rates.

The Directors' Public Health Report of the Bombay Presidency published February 9, 1925, yielded the following extract: "The increased mortality over 1922 which was the low record year, from 452,581 deaths to 496,244 was mainly the result of epidemics, plague, cholera, measles and small-pox, which carried off over 50,000 people, or thirty-one and a half times the number in 1922. Influenza as a factor in causing deaths has steadily diminished since 1918, when the estimated number of deaths was 1,041,481. In 1923 less than a thousand deaths were returned as being due to this cause. The number of deaths from cholera was 9,221, against 2,768 in 1922, and 12,886, the average for ten years. During the year there were 33,741 plague deaths, equal to a death rate per thousand of 1.76, or four times the figure for 1922. Dharwar and Belgaum are the chief plague centers for the presidency. In Satara-



town practically thirty-one per thousand of the population died of plague. Deaths from small-pox number 2,811, as compared with 1,170 in 1922.

These extracts, while dealing with conditions in the province of India known as the Bombay Presidency, will afford some basis for an estimate of conditions.

When we reflect that the powers of a strongly administered public health service in an informed and educated community can immensely reduce such an appalling mortality, with its almost equally horrid morbidity, we stand aghast at the situation in Asia. Education and enlightenment should move hand in hand with economic freedom there. India should go forward fastest of all Oriental states, being under the ægis of enlightened Britain. Yet that sovereign land is extremely slow to loosen grips.

Should not every earnest thinker ponder upon the problem of how we may urge, from all sides, the loosing of ancient bonds for all our Asiatic brothers? Perhaps as we ponder and discuss the subject the general sentiment may have an influence upon the situation.

W. V-H.



## THE BUDDHIST ANNUAL OF CEYLON

In Ceylon, the stronghold of Pali Buddhism, is published each year the *Buddhist Annual*, a large magazine, filled with interesting articles and illustrations. The *Annual* for 1925 contains 64 large pages. We can not pass this magazine by without quoting some of the most striking and valuable passages for our readers.

J. F. McKechnie writes in "The Appeal of the Dhamma":

Men to-day in western lands have entirely lost the old motives to right living that once moved them, hopes of "heaven" and fears of "hell" and awe of a "God" who possessed the power to dispatch them to one or the other for endless time, according as it pleased him. What can replace these outworn sanctions of morality? There is nothing else can do this but the Dhamma which sets before men as motive to right living, the most powerful general motive of all, release from pain: not from hypothetical pain in an indefinite, un-arrived, doubtful future, but from actual, present pain in the actual, present hour.

The artist, E. H. Brewster, contributes some "Thoughts on the Life of the Buddha." We quote:

The conception has spread in the West that the Buddhist ideal is a passive, inactive one. Only a little reading of the scriptures is necessary to dissipate such a conception, where the Buddha is constantly found preaching the need of strenuous exertion and right aspiration. An examination of the Abhidhamma books would soon reveal the high moral value given to these qualities. This higher desire, or aspiration which has in it no greed, is to be found in the work of an artist or scientist when he is most truly such, forgetful of self, desiring only that beauty or truth be manifest. . .

After his Enlightenment the Blessed One lived not because he desired life *for himself*. Life had brought to him its ultimate gift in giving him Enlightenment.



He the Awakened, the Victorious One, now could pass into Parinibbana, but instead for some forty years he patiently—nay with utmost happiness—remained in this world continuously wandering from place to place, teaching the Noble Way. Unlike other men the root of his life lay not in a personal desire for life, but the basis lay in *compassion*. Compassion had governed his life previously; however until he had arrived at Enlightenment there had been the need of life's experience for him. Now that that need had gone, he was freed from this world, bound only to it by compassion. He had become in the profoundest, utmost sense the compassionate One.

. . . Some come to the teaching with preconceived ideas, and long remain ignorant that these are not to be found in the Dhamma. So it is also of great importance to note what is absent, that we may keep our conception of the Dhamma pure. The Buddhist teaching is like a great musical composition; study will reveal what is the theme that runs through the whole.

Edward Greenly gives a scholarly analysis of "The Term 'God' as the Name of a Person." In the Old Testament roughly about ten thousand passages use names for divinity and there are thirteen different names used for this purpose:

*Yahwé* (Jehovah) occurs 6823 times, and always as the personal name of the tribal god of Israel. *Elohim* (gods) occurs 2570 times, while *Eloah* (god) is found 57 times, of which 41 are in the book of Job. *El* (god) is used 217 times, of which 73 are in the Psalms and 55 in the book of Job. *Adonai* (My Lord) occurs 134 times; *Sabaoth* (of armies) 282 times, and as an attribute of Yahwé. Other names are: *Ab* ("father," of the Jewish nation); *Abir* (strong one); *Sur* (rock); *Elyon* (almighty); *Shaddai* (an obscure word); *Baal* (lord, or proprietor);

*Moloch* (king). The last two were long regarded as names of "heathen" deities, but really refer to Yahwé, or Jehovah. The author concludes:

Thus it appears that the Christian term "God" ("Ho Theos") was not a translation; for the only term it could possibly translate which was of sufficiently frequent occurrence, was in the plural, and plurality in theology had become anathema. Yahwé alone remains; and the identification with that is, we have seen, undoubted. But even by the time of the appearance of the earliest Christian tracts, the new religion was repudiating restriction to Jewry, and aspiring to the domination of the Gentiles, who could not be expected to accept so national a deity as Yahwé. The use of that term, *as a name*, was consequently out of the question. Thus the only course open was to adopt the Greek term "theos," already familiar in the Mediterranean world, and, identifying it with the personality of Yahwé, to use it, not as a generic designation, but as a personal name.

The Bhikkhu Narada in "The Buddha's Method of Exposition," translates an extract:

What does the Buddha expound? He expounds Enjoyment or Satisfaction; Vanity, Worthlessness or Wretchedness; Release or Salvation; Fruit, Blessing or Consequence; Means or Way; and Ordinance or Injunction. . .

What is Salvation or Release? "He who avoids objects of pleasure even as one keeps one's foot away from the head of a serpent, he, with mindfulness, transcends this craving (*tanha*) that pervades the world."

"Hence the individual acting always with mindfulness, will avoid objects of delight. Forsaking them he will cross the flood, as one would reach the other shore having emptied the ship of water."

D. B. Jayatilaka, a lawyer, writes on "Buddhism as the World-Religion":

Buddhism offers no dogmas the belief in which is necessary for salvation. It is understanding, knowledge, wisdom that purifies, not mere faith. The seat of



authority is Reason which must prescribe for each one of us the rule of life. . . .

It may well be asked: "Why should men give up evil, do what is good, and purify the heart; in short what is the incentive to the leading of the higher life?" The motive may be considered as two-fold: the desire for one's own good, and the good of others. None of us are free from sorrow and suffering and we all realise how imperfect we are. We wish to be happy and we wish, at least in our unselfish moments, to relieve that suffering and remove the causes of that unhappiness.

Our *Legion* member, Rev. Louise Grieve, of Los Angeles, contributes "Wesak Day, 2469 B.E."

Karma or the law of cause and effect: Nothing exists without an antecedent cause and all that exists is the effect of a cause. . . .

The Great Ones can only point the way; in reality each must find liberation for himself. No one else can carry us over the ocean of Samsara [the round of birth, death and re-birth]. It is through long ages of stress and struggle that each one must go through the process of refinement and culture till he reaches a stage of evolution where he is able to comprehend the nature of existence.

"At the Corner Hill" is a charming story from the scriptures, translated by J. F. McKechnie:

"There are, Maharaja, five qualities fitting for struggle. What are these five qualities? A Bhikkhu has confidence, he has faith in the Enlightenment of the Accomplished One, thus: 'This is the Blessed One, the Exalted One, the Fully Awakened One, the Perfect in Knowledge and in Conduct, the Auspicious One, the Knower of all the worlds, the supreme Guide of men who wish to be guided, the Teacher of gods and men.'

"And he is hale and well; his forces are equally blended, neither too cold nor too hot for the carrying on of the Middle Effort.

"And he is honest and undeceiving; lays himself open, in accord with the truth, to the Master or to experienced Brothers of the Order.

"And he abides vigorous and resolute in putting away unwholesome things and in bringing about wholesome things.

"And he is wise, endowed with the wisdom that sees the rise and fall of things, the noble penetrating wisdom that leads to the complete ending of Ill."

Speaking of Buddhists of to-day, Sunyananda writes in "The True Worship of the Buddha":

They need to realize that true worship of the Buddha is the quest for "right belief," the understanding of "the arising and of the passing away of things," the knowledge of the "compounded" in order to reach the "un-compounded." In brief, the only right token of his respect that a disciple can offer to the Buddha is to endeavor to become a Buddha himself.

In "The Source of Effort" the Bhikkhu Mahinda concludes with words of the Lord Buddha:

And what is the goal to which, even in this life, the thinker who takes the Buddha as his guide, attains? "Mindful of Transiency, Dispassion, Cessation and Renunciation, he attains to his own Deliverance, and he knows: 'Re-birth is ended; lived out is the Holy Life; done all that was to do; for me this world is no more.'"

A part of the *Anguttara Nikaya* (Numerically Ordered Sayings of the Buddha) has recently been translated into English by A. D. Jayasundera and published in book form, 350 pages, at about \$3.00. We wish to quote the famous criterion of what one should accept as true guidance:

"Come you, O Bhaddiya, accept not on hearsay, nor by tradition, nor by what people say; accept not because it is in the scriptures, nor by mere logic, nor by inference, nor by consideration of appearances, not because it accords with your views, nor because of respect to authority, with the thought 'one must revere a recluse.' But if at any time you know of yourself 'these are immoral



conditions; these are wrongful; these are reproached by the wise and these when observed and fulfilled conduce to loss and pain'—then, Bhaddiya, eschew them."

C. S.

### *THE TRAGEDY OF SAMSON*

Samson, like Moses, a myth of initiation, was a just type of his class, a hero and a martyr. In his earlier years he is a hero and slays his enemies, which are his faults and his assaults of karmic emotion, with strangely chosen weapons. His wit is sharp; his riddles, smacking of occult meanings, thwart his antagonists. His enemies, like those of Arjuna, are his own sins, his own karmic bonds given leonine or human embodiment.

With adolescence comes his foolish consorting with Delilah, symbol of astral allurement. Pitting his wit against hers, he is victor but for a day and soon he must pay the price in full to keep the siren's favor.

Then comes the combat with the men of Israel, symbolizing the enemies of yet higher realms of consciousness. Samson, betrayed by his astral love-mate, breaks his bonds.

But when at last he is quite deluded by his enemies, who are really his karmic self in objective realization, he loses his vision altogether and his enemies rejoice openly over him. His old karma overcomes him, having gained entrance through his willful error.

Blind, of course, the hero is lost to self-defence, and his enemies cast him in prison, take him from the fields of free will in action. His energies

are turned to the advantage of his opponents. But, though blind to his enemies of maya, he has a flash of the old vision of the spirit. With inspiration he realizes that his status is desperate. He cannot gain a victory over his enemies single-handed. And he realizes that they must be destroyed at a stroke. So he will destroy the personality and make perish his enemies, who are really the faults of his lower self.

He calls loudly upon his god, his guru, his higher self; he begs for a moment of his ancient might. His pathetic petition is granted him out of his misery and blindness!

He spreads abroad his giant arms, to grasp the pillars supporting his personality! Power comes, the temple supports yield; the whole personality is utterly dissolved! His enemies are destroyed with the killed personality. The ego is free and, for a time, may dwell with the Father!

W. V-H.

### *MAN, CONSCIOUSNESS AND BODY*

In this age of rapid material advance it is easy to become engrossed in the art of making a living; in fact it is often a stern duty. It is therefore all the more important for the earnest student of life to make special efforts to find the time, even if only a few minutes each day, for self-study and self-training. It is almost a necessity to make a regular habit of this practice; for unless it is done regularly the power that resides in routine and order is lost. Just as



most men of good common sense take meals at regular or practically fixed hours, so ought the student of occultism take pains to have some fixed time each day for probing into the mysteries of life and death.

The outstanding fact about human life is that it is very complex and for the most part very subtle and difficult to analyse. This fact makes it all the more important to make a beginning in this study now in this life-time and not postpone the work to some future incarnation. If you are interested in occultism now, it is a good sign that you have been interested before. Perhaps you have practiced self-study and meditation in other lives: then it is very desirable that you should continue to do so in this present life-time. Man must know himself; that is one of the great facts of life; we are all here to grow in power, in knowledge and in skill in action.

We know that there is a duality about life: there is the material side and the spiritual or consciousness side. We need not inquire at this moment about immortality. The facts we wish to study should be facts for the materialist as well as the man who believes in spiritual life. So we may agree that there is body and consciousness in every human being. Some philosophers regard consciousness as real, and matter as unreal; others think the very opposite; we prefer to give validity and reality to both, and we know that they are, in fact, interdependent.

When the man has a physical life, the body is obvious and all recognize its existence. Consciousness, also, is a matter of fact. Now, much of

this consciousness could not be, were it not for the fact that the body exists. What we have here in mind is the consciousness of the physical body, its movements and its guidance.

When the man has lost his physical body he will still be himself, but whereas before death the physical body was objective (non-consciousness), after death the astral body becomes objective and may be regarded as not consciousness. It might seem that consciousness here loses a part of itself, but this is probably immediately balanced by an extension of consciousness into the finer, subtler part of nature. In other words, while the man has lost touch with the entire physical world he has greater possibilities of perceiving things in the astral world, and being conscious perhaps in subtler ways not previously recognized.

We have spoken of the duality of spirit-matter or body and consciousness, but all along we have spoken of "the man" as well. We could not do otherwise, for the man is to himself self-evident. The fundamental fact is that he has the consciousness of "I am." But the man is neither consciousness nor body, but a mystery behind them, in some way acting through them, or seeming so to do.

Therefore we have here a triangle: man at the up-pointing corner and body and consciousness at the two lower ones. It may be suspected that just as body and consciousness are really continually changing and evolving, so the man himself may do likewise. He would therefore not be really immortal, but no student of karma and reincarnation need feel distressed, for we accept the truth of bodies and consciousnesses coming



periodically into being throughout ages of time, therefore the source of all these must be wonderful beyond our present comprehension.

We do have reason to believe that there is mystery enough to be explored, with great joy and satisfaction, well below the point where body and consciousness come together and disappear as such at the upper corner of the triangle. Long may we aspire to become at-one with the "Father in Heaven," the source and true center of our being!

C. S.

### DO OUR SOULS COME BACK?

Mr. Brisbane, who writes editorials for the Hearst newspapers, often alludes to reincarnation favorably. In the *Brisbane Editorial Review* of April 1922, appeared an article entitled "Do Our Souls Come Back?," from which the following is taken, for the benefit of our readers:

Do our souls come back and live in other bodies? The doctrine of reincarnation says "yes." That doctrine would certainly promote charity, human solidarity.

Hundreds of millions of human beings believe that after death our souls return here and enter other bodies.

In India, Japan and elsewhere it is thought that the soul of a human being sometimes enters the body of an inferior animal.

Many a religious person in those countries refrains from killing a fly or a lizard, lest he should destroy his own great-grandmother.

In this belief of reincarnation a system of rewards and punishments is bound up. It is thought that wicked men's souls are sent back to inhabit the bodies of low

animals—the very wicked man is sent back to inhabit the body of a woman. ....

There is a great deal of speculation everywhere to-day as to the destiny of the soul, and the possibility of its coming back to work here in some other body.

Many men among those religiously inclined, and even among clergymen, do not accept literally the Jewish conception of Heaven.

Many are inclined to think that men are put here to do some actual, useful work on earth, and not merely on probation previous to their entrance to an eternal home of solid gold, jasper, etc.

This writer has no theory to offer in realms where both reason and experience fail.

But the reincarnation theory might produce good results under modified conditions.

In olden days, vicious men used to reform and behave, in their old age, because they were anxious about going to Heaven—worried by disagreeable stories of the other place.

If we could all believe that as soon as we die, or shortly after, our souls come back to inhabit the body of some new-born child, we might take a charitable view of other people's needs, and plan very industriously for the welfare of the next generation.

Many a rich man on his way to the train or boat drives through the slums of a great city and looks, absent-minded at the children in the streets, tired, hot, ill-fed and uncared for.

He might look differently at those children if he could be made to believe that a few years would find him a tenant in one of their wasted, underfed bodies.

The rich woman wearing her fine apparel, regardless of the tired hands and the aching eyes that put it together, might interest herself in the sewing girl, if she thought that a few years would find her on earth and at work in a stuffy sweat-shop room. ....

If the enormously rich men could be made to believe in reincarnation, they would realize that, as the poor outnumber the rich a hundred to one, so the chances of their being rich in the next existence would be only



one in a hundred, and all their plans would change.

---

The real Christian needs no selfish urging born of a belief in reincarnation. He is bound to work for others, to protect poor children, to sympathize with unfortunate women, apart from any personal interest.

But the *real* Christian is not a numerous product of civilization.

There is a great deal of talk about a new religion—new religions of various kinds spring up every year.

If some able man will give a great boom to the theory of reincarnation, making every man believe that a few years will find him in the place of the most unfortunate of mortals, we may get results that the preaching of abstract unselfishness does not always produce.

W. W. Weitling.

[Mr. Brisbane is interested in the usefulness of a belief in reincarnation for making rich people unselfish. But the important question is whether reincarnation is true. We say it is true. *Ed.*]

#### A NEW LEGION PROPERTY

Mr. and Mrs. Lowell Hoit and Miss Edith C. Gray have given such sums of money as, taken with the financial coöperation of another member, have given to the *Legion* a farm of one hundred and twenty-five acres with a good frontage upon a river in the southern peninsula of Michigan. Deeds have been executed in favor of Mr. Hoit, Miss Gray and Dr. C. Shuddemagen *in joint tenancy*. They will administer the property in the interest of the *Legion* and for the same purpose transmit it to their successors.

The river frontage of this property is very attractive, and we believe that, after a reasonable period of time for development, it can be of much use to the members and to the work of our body.

Our heartiest gratitude goes to those who gave this great aid.

## FIELD NOTES

The following is from a letter of a subscriber:

"I enclose one dollar subscription to REINCARNATION and one dollar toward the work of the *Legion*.

"If my most heart-felt wishes and desires could avail, it would be one hundred!

"To understand the laws of reincarnation and karma is truly the Hope and the Light of this world."

In GERMANY a number of the older groups have become inactive. Frl. Guttman, Representative of the *Legion*, has found new workers and good work is done quietly in study classes. She has lectured in some of the German-speaking cities of Switzerland and has interested various persons in taking up *Legion* activities.

AUSTRIA is steadily pursuing its way, under the able leadership of Herr Karl Riedel, the energetic Representative, who is doing a great work in stimulating the workers in the Balkan countries and keeping them in touch with the movement by correspondence. Herr Riedel and his associates have given several lectures during the winter, and always with marked success. Austria has now well over two hundred members.

In CZECHOSLOVAKIA conditions are shaping themselves favorably. A number of applications have been received from Brünn, where it is hoped a group will later be organized. There are also some members in Prague.

A letter from Sr. Emilio Traverso, Representative for Peru, states that the work is going on, in spite of the small number of active centers.

ITALY has sent in a number of new applications, for various cities and groups. The magazine RINCARNAZIONE is appearing regularly as a quarterly now; it is maintaining a high standard of literary quality and distinction. The number of pages of each number is increased to fifty.

The group in Florence has lost its fine leader, Marguerite Kamensky, who has removed to Milan.

Due to special work there has been a delay in issuing this number of REINCARNATION, so that the issue covers the months of May, June, July and August.